

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendment and the following remarks.

By the foregoing amendment, claims 1 and 3 have been amended and claims 2 and 8-13 canceled. Thus, claims 1 and 3-7 are currently pending in the application and subject to examination.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action dated July 26, 2007, the Examiner objected to claims 2, 3, and 5 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but noted that these claims include allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim 2 has been rewritten in independent form, as suggested by the Examiner, by including the features of claim 2 in independent claim 1. Thus, the Applicants submit that claim 1 is allowable, as indicated by the Examiner. As claim 1 is allowable, the Applicants submit that claims 3-7, which depend from allowable claim 1, are therefore also allowable.

II. Claim Rejections

Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), claims 1, 6, and 7 were rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,945,348 to Ibamoto et al. ("Ibamoto") and by U.S. Patent No. 5,631,750 to Minoura et al. ("Minoura"); claims 8, 9, and 11-13 as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 20030222980 to Miyagaki et al. ("Miyagaki"); claims 8 and 10 as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 20020044241 to Matsuo ("Matsuo"); and

claims 1 and 4 as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 20020190643 to Cummings et al. ("Cummings").

As discussed above, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 2, as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, the Applicants submit that these rejections are moot.

CONCLUSION

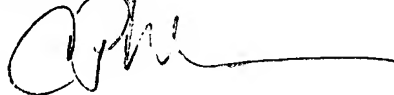
For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending patentability distinguish the present invention from the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into condition for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fee for this extension may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 01-2300. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300 with reference to Attorney Docket No. 025789-00006.

Respectfully submitted,

Arent Fox LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CPM', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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